

# Governance Resources

for leaders of

New and Emerging Communities



**wacoss**

Western Australian  
Council of Social Service Inc

*Ways to make  
a difference*



New and Emerging Communities Governance Induction Kit 2011

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# Introduction to Governance

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## Organisational Review

*Discuss, as a committee, how your organisation is going against these areas:*

	<b>Key issues</b>	<b>Any concerns?</b>
<b>Goals for next 2 months</b>		
<b>Plan for next year</b>		
<b>Financial systems working</b>		
<b>Know and communicate with members</b>		
<b>Communication within whole committee</b>		
<b>Understand roles and responsibilities</b>		
<b>Know legal status and follow constitution rules</b>		

*Use the Action Plan template to develop a plan for any areas that you agree needs some attention.*

# Constitutions and Incorporation

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## Know your Constitution

*We encourage you to fill these out individually then compare your knowledge as a committee. Committee members are each responsible for having a copy of the Constitution and knowing the answers to these questions.*

What is the number of people to be elected to your main committee?	
How many of these members are required for a quorum at a committee meeting?	
How often do you have to have elections or AGMs?	
What must be done at an AGM according to your constitution?	
How long is the term of the Chair or President?	
How many categories of membership are there? Who can be a member?	
How often do you legally have to meet?	
How many people are required to call a Special General Meeting?	
What are the Objectives of your organisation?	

## Steps to incorporation

### The steps to Incorporation are:

- 1. Read through "Inc." website <http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/associationsguide/>*
- 2. Download the required forms and the Model Rules of Association (draft Constitution)*
- 3. Read draft Constitution as a Committee and identify clauses that need some work*
- 4. Consider using some of the workshop activities as a committee.*
- 5. Agree on Name and Objectives*
- 6. Place advertisement in newspaper*
- 7. Agree on changes to quorum and other rules, finalise Constitution*
- 8. Submit to Department with forms and fees*

# Effective committees

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## Effective committees

*Effective committees usually have some common qualities. This sheet can be used to review your committee's activities. There may be some areas you would like to improve.*

Qualities of effective committees	Needs work?	A small step to improve things	Who will do it?	When?
Have regular meetings				
Are organised, everyone knows when the next meetings are and they get there				
Have agendas and minutes and use these keep track of agreements and progress on tasks				
Report on progress and any jobs that they decided need to be done at the last meeting.				
Run on time				
Make decisions and focus on the most important issues				
Make sure the organisation is financially and legally healthy and that a basic plan for the future is in place				
Delegates jobs to sub committees				
Look to the future, to be strategic and to reduce crises				
Are flexible and supportive of each other and help to prevent burn out				
Have good communication systems running, using a range of methods such as email, text and phone.				
Know their core values and openly share and discuss how to apply their values to the situations the organisations face.				

## Meeting planner

*Use this sheet to plan a series of committee meetings*

Date	Location	Times			

## Agenda

Date

Time

Location

Time	Topic or Item for Discussion
	Introductions
	Urgent or Important cultural issues requiring discussion first
	Confirm and review previous minutes
	Review Agenda and decide on priority decisions that need to be made during meeting
	Chairpersons report
	Treasurers report
	Subcommittee updates and reports
	Main events planned for the next month
	Risks – what are current risks
	Planning activities
	Other items or general business
	Review decisions made and who is responsible for actions
	Agree on next meeting time

Any extra notes or information



# Leadership and accountability

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## Leadership worksheet

	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>A small way I can improve is:</i>	<i>A small thing our community group can do to improve is:</i>
<i>Leadership and great leaders</i>			
<i>Running great projects and services for members and the community.</i>  <i>The coordination, facilitation and responsibility for the activities</i>			
<i>Governance structure</i>  <i>Framework that holds the balance and boundaries of roles in the right place to lead and manage the organisation</i>			

## Values activity

*What values are important for you? What values are important for how you run your organisation?*

<b>My values for how to be a good leader</b>	<b>Our organisation's values</b>
e.g. honesty	e.g. democracy and good communication



## Action plan for strengthening key leadership areas

*This activity can be used by a leader or a committee to talk about the building quality of how your organisation runs. Work out how to improve these five key areas and then decide which steps to take first.*

<b>Leadership area</b>	<b>Ideas for how we can improve</b>
e.g. Community ownership	Thank community, provide awards to active volunteers, run a meeting to listen to children's ideas
e.g. Capacity	Set up office, get computer, treasurer to attend accounting training,
<i>Situation</i>	
<i>Capacity</i>	
<i>Community ownership</i>	
<i>Direction and vision</i>	
<i>Action on projects</i>	

## Action plan for strengthening key leadership areas

*This activity can be used by a leader or a committee to talk about building quality of leadership in these five key areas.*

<b>Leadership area</b>	<b>Ideas for how we can improve</b>
<i>e.g. Power</i>	
<i>Power</i>	
<i>Trust</i>	
<i>Empathy</i>	
<i>Change</i>	
<i>Communication</i>	

## **Next step Culture and values**

*Develop a values statement that defines the core values of your organisation and indicates that there is an expectation that the committee will lead by example.*

### **Steps:**

- 1. There is a values sheet in the appendices that you can discuss at a committee meeting to help with deciding which values will guide the organisation.*
- 2. Aim for something about one paragraph long, or no more than a few sentences.*
- 3. Get agreement from the whole committee on the statement.*
- 4. Distribute copies so everyone knows it*

### **Uses:**

- 1. Consider placing this in your constitution next time that it is revised*
- 2. Put the values statement on the back of your business cards or the top of the letter head.*
- 3. Include the values statement in text for funding applications*
- 4. Read it out at the next AGM just before the elections to help to establish a vision for the conduct of the new committee*
- 5. Put the statement into newsletters or pamphlets and invite the community to actively assist in achieving or living by these values*
- 6. Use it to review the conduct of committees or projects*

# Planning and capacity building resources

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**Action Plan template - comprehensive**

<b>Why</b>	<b>What we imagine</b>	<b>How will we do it</b>	<b>What to do</b>	<b>Who will do it</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>How much</b>	<b>What will be produced</b>	<b>What will be different/changed</b>	<b>How can we tell it has worked</b>
<b>Values</b>	<b>Vision</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Volunteers, staff, partners</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget \$</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>

### Action Plan Template - small

Strategy or Project	Action	Details of tasks	Who	When	Notes

## **Looking forward and strategic thinking**

*In a sentence, what is the aim of your group?*

*What will your group be doing in 2 or 3 years time?*

## Planning changes

Area	What will be the main <u>changes</u> from now until one year's time?	Ideas for action	Rank
<i>How your organisation is run?</i>			
<i>Your capacity to meet the needs of your community</i>			
<i>Your capacity to meet your vision</i>			
<i>Who is involved in volunteering and leading</i>			
<i>Which activities you provide to for community</i>			
<i>Committee structure, subcommittees groups</i>			
<i>The size of your membership</i>			
<i>Partnerships and funding</i>			
<i>How you are perceived</i>			
<i>How you give people roles in projects</i>			
<i>Other</i>			

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## SWOT Analysis

		<b>How can we</b>
<b>Strengths</b>		<i>Grow, build, translate to other projects, nurture our strengths?</i>
<b>Weaknesses</b>		<i>Reduce, build capacity, train, add structure to address weaknesses?</i>
<b>Opportunities</b>		<i>Explore, check fit, prioritise opportunities?</i>
<b>Threats</b>		<i>Use Risk Management, reduce severity, reduce likelihood, budget extra time/effort of threats?</i>

## Strategic and project planning – why?

	<b>Continuing as we currently do things or run projects, meetings and the organisation</b>	<b>How stronger planning and use of plans to steer activities might help</b>
<b>Pluses</b>		
<b>Minuses</b>		
<b>Ideas</b>		

**Inclusive organisational culture**

<b>Plusses</b>	<b>Minuses</b>	<b>Ideas</b>

**Participative decision making**

<b>Plusses</b>	<b>Minuses</b>	<b>Ideas</b>

## Actions for how to improve

	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Plusses of idea</b>	<b>Minuses or negative impacts</b>	<b>Actions for maintaining changes</b>
<i>Satisfaction with decision making</i>				
<i>Decisions on who can be involved in projects</i>				
<i>Deciding on money matters</i>				
<i>Identifying risks and emerging problems in the community</i>				
<i>Helping people to manage their responsibilities</i>				
<i>Building individual's skills</i>				

## Next steps managing expectations and pressure

### Discuss in detail as a committee:

1. *Does each member feel they can meet all the expectations on them?*
2. *Are the expectations on each person realistic?*
3. *What are the benefits of having expectations that are too high?*
4. *What are the disadvantages of having expectations that are too high?*
5. *Are there some expectations that are lower priority?*
6. *What can we do as a committee to prioritise better?*

## **Next steps on addressing barriers**

*As a committee, agree to formally address barriers to your success with achieving goals*

*Agree to discuss barriers for 15 minutes at every meeting and to work together to learn how to address barriers as a committee*

### **Identify**

- 1. The barriers to achieving the plans*
- 2. A small step that can be done to address each barrier*
- 3. Who and when this small step will be done by*
- 4. Write the details in the minutes*
- 5. Agree to check for progress at the next meeting*
- 6. At the next meeting talk for 15 minutes about barriers, progress and the next steps (that will be reviewed at the following meeting)*

## **Next steps on prioritising**

### **As a committee,**

- 1. make a list of projects or actions that need to be undertake*
- 2. Rate each one for Importance: High, Medium, Low*
- 3. Rate each one for Urgency: High, Medium, Low*
- 4. Decide which ones to do in the next 6 months*
- 5. Develop a timeline and agree on how realistic it is*

## **Steps to developing a strategic plan with your committee**

### **Developing a draft strategic plan for the next year**

- 1. Meet together and talk about what you want to do in the next year.*
- 2. Make a list of the main things that you hope to achieve*
- 3. Work out how much time, energy and money you have*
- 4. Choose which are the most important things you want in your plan.*
- 5. Aim to make sure you clarify the main three to five important things to do. This way, as you are busy running everything, at least you know you have the main things covered, everything else is less important.*
- 6. Then work out what to do first, what to do next month and so on.*
- 7. Review the plan regularly and update it at committee meetings to keep it realistic and relevant*

### **For a 2-3 year plan**

#### **The basic issues to cover for a strategic plan are:**

- 1. Where are you now?*
- 2. Where do you want to be in 2 or 3 years?*
- 3. What do you need to do to get there?*
- 4. Which things are most important things to do and which things need to happen first?*
- 5. Follow the general steps for the 1 year plan, but keep the detail for Years 2 and 3 simple because it is likely that many things will change such as timing, funding and committee membership.*

# Worksheet for prioritising tasks

*Use Covey's time management matrix to rate which tasks to focus on*

	<b>Urgent</b>	<b>Not so urgent</b>
<b>Important</b>		
<b>Not so important</b>		

## Worksheet for capacity building review

	<b>Urgent</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Ideas for simple solutions</b>	<b>Do-able</b>
<i>Make decisions together effectively</i>				
<i>Keep members informed</i>				
<i>Build the bank balance</i>				
<i>Establish an office</i>				
<i>Support volunteers and committee members e.g. petrol or phone costs</i>				
<i>Serve our community</i>				
<i>Respond to crises</i>				
<i>Run the AGM well</i>				
<i>Run projects and get funding</i>				

1. Review as a committee, agree on a rate for each area to show how urgent and important. Come up with some simple things to address any issues and then discuss if these ideas are practical and do-able given other pressures and your capacity.
2. Complete the action plan template for the highest priority solutions.
3. Review progress at the next committee meeting.

# Risk and Change

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## Areas of risk to discuss with your committee

	<b>Issues for this area</b>	<b>Severity if a problem</b>	<b>Likelihood of serious impacts</b>	<b>Rate priority for action</b>
Loss of key people committees or leading projects				
Loss of control of important information e.g. accounts or the contacts lists				
Damage to the reputation of the organisation or the committee				
Problems during the delivery of projects, e.g. not having receipts				
Rumours in the community				
Perceptions of favouritism, alliances, tribalism or regionalism				
Problems with the conduct of the election				
Running out of money				
Theft				
Miscommunication or inaccurate expectations or assumptions				
Legal issues when entering into partnerships				
Loss of knowledge, and leaderships skills after an election				
Ethical issues or conflicts of interest				
Projects running late or costing too much.				

1. Use the Action Plan templates to develop steps for priority actions to address risk.
2. Review the progress at each committee meeting.
3. Keep minutes and action plans as records to have documentation of your accountability if there is a serious problem. They may assist you to protect the committee from legal risk.

# Polices and Procedures

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## Next steps for developing policies

### Identify if there are any areas to develop policies and procedures

1. *Decide at a committee level whether there are any areas of the organisation that could be supported by a policy. For example, there may be inconsistent ways of paying for items resulting in receipts being lost or not provided to the treasurer. In this example a policy and procedure could be written to show how the organisation expects things to be done, hopefully leading to an improvement for the treasurer.*
2. *Discuss what is and is not working about how things are done now*
3. *Discuss how the future way of doing things would be*
4. *Discuss whether there are any disadvantages to that new way, and see if some small change can address these problems.*
5. *Agree on how the new system will be, preferable at a committee meeting*
6. *Write down the new system in short clear sentences, preferably in the minutes of the meeting where it is agreed.*
7. *Give everyone who needs to know about the policy a copy*
8. *Consider explaining the new policy to the membership at the AGM or another meeting, so they can see that you are building the capacity of the organisation to be stronger and run more smoothly.*
9. *Review the new policies after a few months to work out whether they are being followed and whether any changes are needed to improve them.*

# Financial Management

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## Review Checklist for Financial management

This list is intended for Treasurers to use to review system in their organisation. Remembering it is the responsibility of all committee members to understand and support the financial systems, this can be used at a committee meeting to plan how to improve the system. This will often be a lot of work so it is important to prioritise and for several people to help. Some organisation set up a finance sub-committee to assist and to support the Treasurer.

Area	Current status	Small step to improve situation
Monthly discussion of the accounts and planned expenses and income at each committee meeting		
Encouraging a culture where it is acceptable to discuss how well the money is being managed and to work to improve the processes		
Planning for when you will need money and working towards this to prevent crises		
Being clear, at a committee level, about how to manage conflicts of interest		
Identifying the main sources of financial risk, and addressing them		
Ensuring several or all members of the committee are regularly involved in planning the finances		
Identifying volunteers to assist the Treasurer to improve the financial situation and the financial systems for the organisation, potentially by setting up a finances sub-committee		
Having policies and procedures for income and payments, including cheques and the use of bank accounts		
Providing an easy to understand financial summary to the community at each AGM		
Accessing training for committee members, especially the Treasurer		

1. After the review, the committee or Treasurer could decide on two or three priority action. These actions can be developed into an Action Plan (using the template).
2. Effectively managing the risks, the money and the communication within the committee and with the community will help the Treasurer to lead this large area of responsibility safely. It is the responsibility of the whole committee to be aware of decisions and to support the Treasurer with their responsibilities.

## **Useful financial links and contacts**

### **WACOSS**

[www.wacoss.org.au](http://www.wacoss.org.au)

### **Department of Commerce WA**

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/associationsguide/>

### **Our Community**

[http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/financial/financial\\_article.jsp?articleId=1043](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/financial/financial_article.jsp?articleId=1043)

### **Australian Taxation Office**

<http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/>